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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 002080

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SUBJECT: PM DISCUSSES BAGHDAD SECURITY PLAN, SITE 4,
BASRAH, ZARQAWI REMAINS

REF: BAGHDAD 1960

Classified By: Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: In a June 15 meeting with the Prime Minister, the Ambassador and GEN Casey discussed the Baghdad security plan; the Site 4 investigation; Basrah; military operations in Ramadi; security transition; the Arab League Boycott; and an upcoming detainee release. END SUMMARY.

Baghdad Security Plan

¶2. (C) On June 15, the Ambassador, GEN Casey, A/DCM Speckhard, and DCG Fry met with PM Maliki. GEN Casey emphasized to the PM the importance of ensuring balance in the implementation of the Baghdad security plan so that it is not perceived as focusing primarily on Sunni neighborhoods. Maliki acknowledged that some Imams are claiming that the plan is unfair in its application, but Maliki asserted that he has made several public statements emphasizing a balanced approach and that operations are taking place in Sunni (Dhiya), Shia (Sadr City), and mixed neighborhoods. However, the PM pointed out that in order for the plan to be effective, there are safe havens in Sunni areas that undoubtedly will have to be targeted. Ambassador urged the PM to make additional public statements that emphasize balance and the targeting of unauthorized militias. To assist the GOI's public relations campaign, GEN Casey suggested that Maliki use the militia video that Casey previously gave to him PM. The PM added that the proliferation of personal security details (totaling 11,000), in addition to militias and terrorists, is causing instability.

¶3. (C) The PM requested that MG Thurman assess the Baghdad security operation on a weekly basis. GEN Casey noted that MG Thurman will update the plan every two weeks. The PM said that he was scheduled to address the Council of Representatives (CoR) in the coming days on the Baghdad Security Plan. Casey warned the PM that there may be a Jaysh al-Madhi backlash and to expect more kidnappings and murder. The PM stated strongly that anyone who opposes the plan will be dealt with severely.

Iraqi National Police Detention Facility (Site 4)

¶4. (S) The PM told the Ambassador and GEN Casey that he had asked Minister of Interior Jawad al-Boulani to conduct an investigation into the allegations of torture and rape at Site 4 (reftel). The PM emphasized that the officials involved have been relieved of their duties and turned over to the judiciary for prosecution. The PM instructed Boulani to ensure that such incidents never happen again.

Other Security Issues

15. (S) In response to GEN Casey's request for a prioritized list of regional operations to be reviewed by the Ministerial Committee for National Security (MCNS), the PM said that the priority should be Basrah, Diyala, and transition of security to the Iraqis. On the latter point, it was agreed that after a decision was reached in the MCNS regarding Muthanna, a public announcement could follow several days later and a transfer of security from MNF-I to the Iraqi Security forces could take place as early as July 14.

16. (S) GEN Casey informed the PM of the details of the Ramadi operation. Maliki admitted that he was nervous about the timing of this operation, considering all the complaints he has received. GEN Casey explained that this operation would be larger than normal but would not entail a clearing of neighborhoods. The PM was concerned over the use of airstrikes, tanks or other operations that could be perceived as heavy-handed. Maliki, however, did acknowledge the value of finishing the encirclement of the city and erecting checkpoints while launching small, intelligence-driven operations.

17. (C) GEN Casey, noting completion of UNSCR 1637 review that day, suggested that it may be helpful to form a joint committee to look at point 5 of the GOI's 34-point program. The purpose would be to develop a conditions-based roadmap for future presence of Coalition Forces. This committee, Casey explained, could issue a report that would show the PM's follow-up to the program and could function similarly to

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the Joint Committee on Transition. The PM instructed Dr. Rubaie to follow up with GEN Casey in further exploring the idea.

Benchmarks

18. (S) Ambassador also shared with the PM proposed benchmarks for the next sixth months. The PM agreed on the importance of urgency by the GOI in showing progress and substantial results in the coming months. The PM added that he had asked the CoR to meet five times a week to deal with pressing legislation. (NOTE: We have heard from another source that the Council of Representatives will now meet five times per week vice two. END NOTE.) Maliki said that the Council agreed to discuss the provincial election law, investment legislation, and other issues like de-Ba'athification. It was agreed that Dr. Rubai and the Embassy would consult further on the timing of the benchmarks laid out in the U.S. proposal.

Economic Decision Making

19. (C) Ambassador welcomed the establishment of the Ministerial Committee for Economic Affairs chaired by DPM Salih, but Ambassador noted that the PM's personal attention to economic issues would be important in promoting stabilization and economic recovery in Iraq. In response to the Ambassador's suggestion, the PM agreed to meet bi-weekly in a high level group composed of the PM, the DPMs, the Ambassador, and GEN Casey to review progress on economic issues.

Other Business

¶10. (S) Ambassador informed the PM that the last in a series of detainee releases will occur July 1, bringing the total detainees released in June-July to 2500. Ambassador asked the PM to participate in the ceremony on that day, and the PM agreed. The PM also agreed with the CG's recommendation that the PM visit the Iraqi security forces.

¶11. (S) The PM expressed concern over the MNFI raid of the Karbala Provincial Council Chairman's home. He stated that the Chairman is a member of the Fadila party and does not have a militia.

¶12. (C) The Ambassador raised concerns to the PM about the Arab League boycott and the importance of addressing it. The PM said he was not aware of the issue and it was agreed that further information would be provided.

SPECKHARD